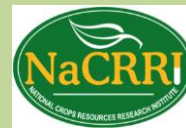


# Catalysing rural transformation through a community based approach

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## Introduction

**Gender inequalities**, that are often amplified by **marginalisation** and **limited empowerment** in rural communities (Melinda, 2014), can be rectified by use of multipronged approaches when disseminating proven **information** and **technologies**. On our part, we are promoting **experiential learning** through a partnership between RAE, NaCRRI and Adipala High School (AHS). Secondary schools play host to **youthful and talented individuals** from diverse rural and urban communities. Thus, through the students and other key stakeholders, secondary schools have potential to **empower communities**.



Cassava, grown by ~7.4 million Ugandan households, offers great potential to uplift masses out of poverty owing to its competitiveness for food and non-food uses. Thus, cassava was our target crop for this initiative.

Our current efforts focus on equitable access to cassava information, technologies and markets, through direct engagement with farmers and students in Kaberamaido, an area experiencing key cassava production obstacles.

## Key achievements and future outlook

Within the past two years, this collaborative undertaking has been able to:

- 1) establish and implement mechanisms for sensitizing students and farmers about the role of agriculture towards economic development, targeting all gender groups.
- 2) pilot the process of sensitizing farmers on opportunities for cassava value addition, the challenges the crop faces along the production to consumption continuum;
- 3) establish a cassava mother garden from which elite planting materials can be accessed; this multiplication site is being managed by students, with technical support from NaCRRI.

This is a learning process and this, the partners are keen on learning and adjusting the approach to suit community context and thus maximize uptake of proven agriculture practices.

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**Reference:** Melinda, F.G. 2014. Putting women and girls at centre of development. *Science* 45:1273–1275